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## **Sámi Pastoralism under the Heel of 'Development'**

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## 1. Introduction

Within International Relations (IR) historical materialism (HM) Eurocentrism is a recognised longstanding problem. IR HM scholars, ranging from world-systems theorists to Neo-Gramscians and Critical Theorists, have declared opposition to it or claimed to have solved it only to be accused of unwittingly reproducing it (Hobson 2012: 236-237; Frank 1998: 31; Anievas 2010: 153; Wallerstein 1997: 101-102). The latest contribution to debate on Eurocentrism in IR HM is the adoption of Leon Trotsky's idea of uneven and combined development (U&CD) to IR. It is proposed as a solution to Eurocentrism in IR for its claimed ability to capture the heterogeneity and multilinearity of human history. This paper challenges U&CD's anti-Eurocentric claims by demonstrating its limitations in relation to pastoral nomadic peoples, here represented by reindeer herding Sámi.

This paper is structured into three sections. The first provides a brief introduction to U&CD in relation to the question of Eurocentrism. The second highlights the deficiencies of U&CD in relation to the empirical case of the relations between Sámi pastoralists and the Nordic states. It is divided into two sections, the first focusing on the Nordic states' policies towards Sámi reindeer pastoralism, and the second on hydroelectric development projects into Sámi territories. The third section introduces the alternative conceptual framework of Enrique Dussel's liberation philosophy, which could overcome these particular shortcomings identified in U&CD's.

## 2. Uneven and Combined Development and Eurocentrism

The adaption of Trotsky's idea of U&CD is the latest theoretical innovation within IR HM proposed as a solution to Eurocentrism in IR. Its main proponents include Justin Rosenberg, Kamran Matin, Kerem Nişancıoğlu and Alexander Anievas. Rosenberg pioneered adapting U&CD to IR, aiming to provide a social ontology capable of theorising inter-societal interaction, seen as missing in both IR and social theory (Rosenberg 2007: 450-1). U&CD internalises the inter-societal dimension into the base abstraction of societal units by positing a world populated by multiple societies with two general characteristics. Firstly, relative socio-economic and cultural unevenness, and secondly, societal hybridity and multilinear paths of development given their emergence from the interaction of other historically prior societies and continuous appropriation of practices from other societies (Rosenberg 2013: 196-185). This active appropriation is compelled by the 'whip of external necessity': the structural compulsion for societies to appropriate innovations from one another to maintain economic and military competitiveness (Rosenberg 2013: 197).

U&CD scholars criticised Eurocentrism by focusing on inaccurate historical representations arising from two Eurocentric conceptions of development. The first is linear conceptions of development, according to which all societies are destined to follow the developmental stages pioneered by Europe. The second is the belief that Europe's transition to modernity was endogenously generated due to Europe's unique internal characteristics, making Europe/the West the superior and universal civilization (Anievas & Nisancioglu 2013: 79-82). These are both regarded as impossible by U&CD, because all development is necessarily both multilinear and hybrid. As it is claimed that U&CD provides a social ontology capable of theorising the societal heterogeneity and multilinearity of human history, it has been proposed as a means of overcoming Eurocentrism in IR (Matin 2013: 367-9).

Gurminder Bhambra and Meera Sabaratnam have questioned U&CD's anti-Eurocentric claims due its reliance on the concept of 'development'. Bhambra criticises the implied assumption that societies pass through linear developmental stages, defined as modes of production (Bhambra 2011: 675-8). Sabaratnam criticises how the concept of development presupposes that societies can be ranked on linear scale as more or less 'developed' (Sabaratnam 2011: 11). Rosenberg attempted to pre-empt the critique by presenting his claim that history is characterised by a chronological succession more advanced societies, defined by modes of production, as empirical rather than conceptual (Rosenberg 2006: 329-330). Sabaratnam countered that 'development' thus conceived is not a self-evident truth, but depends on a selective representation of history, informed by an ontological pre-conception of 'development' (Sabaratnam 2011: 17).

Anievas' and Nişancioğlu's ambiguous position on linear stageism is to assert that U&CD 'presupposes stageism in order to scramble, subvert and transcend it' (Anievas & Nişancioğlu, 2015: 54). 'Subverting' and 'scrambling' refer to U&CD's assumption that all development is necessarily hybrid and multilinear, but 'presupposes' more problematically means that U&CD still retains 'the notion of a succession of more advanced modes of production on a global scale' (Anievas 2014: 45). This makes the defence against linear stageism critique unconvincing, as it implies that the multilinear development of societies is encapsulated within a wider ontological backdrop of linear development on global scale.

In the following section I will demonstrate how problematic the concept of 'development' as defined by U&CD is in the context of the relations between Sámi reindeer pastoralists and the Nordic states.

### 3. 'Development' and Sámi reindeer pastoralism

In theorising the emergence of the international, or inter-societal as U&CD scholars call it, Rosenberg equates the emergence of the societal and inter-societal with the emergence of sedentary social formations and their interactions, disqualifying all nomadic social formations from the status of 'societies' for lacking the defining criteria of internal differentiation and a clear inside/outside distinction (Rosenberg 2006: 329; 2010: 173). Nişancioğlu, Anievas and Matin are more inclusive of non-sedentary entities, but have adopted a problematic definition of pastoral nomads, claiming their mobile mode of production makes them non-territorial, while promoting militaristic traits through its physical rigours (Anivas & Nişancioğlu 2015: 69; Matin 2007: 431-433).

Sámi philosopher Nils Oskal wrote of how sedentary peoples' (mis)perceptions of nomads are reflected in Western philosophy. In Hegel's teleological philosophy of history nomadism represents a pre-civilizational stage with history starting only when the first nomads transition to sedentary agriculture, spelling the end of nomadism (Oskal 1998: 8-9). Nietzsche used nomads as metaphors of chaos and destruction and the absence of any spatio-temporal location or direction (ibid: 9-10). The first of these (mis)characterizations closely resemble Rosenberg's position on nomads in his account of the emergence of the 'intersocietal', where its history starts only with the formation of sedentary agrarian societies. Likewise, Rosenberg places the nomads lowest on the developmental stage. The second characterisation is echoed by Matin, Nişancioğlu and Anievas' definition of pastoral nomadism, which stresses their non-territoriality and warlikeness.

Of these theoretical (mis)characterisations of nomads, the warlike aspect has been absent in the Nordic states' perceptions of Sámi reindeer pastoralism as the Sámi simply never posed a military threat to them. The presumptions of their non-territoriality and the categorisation of nomadism as a low stage of development have however been very present. Sámi historian Veli-Pekka Lehtola describes how the Nordic state elites perceived the Sámi through 'settler theory' (Lehtola 2004: 67). An agrarian perspective that saw the Sámi as stuck in a prehistoric developmental stage, making it the right of more advanced peoples to either assist in developing the Sámi or to displace them (ibid: 67). The next subsection will examine how this stageist developmental thinking has influenced the Nordic states' policies towards Sámi reindeer pastoralism.

### 3.1 Developmentalism in the States' Policies towards Sámi pastoralism

Since the emergence of large-scale Sámi reindeer pastoralism in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was based on extensive flexible use of territory, organized around herding bands called *siidas*, composed of several families (Lundmark 1990: 40; Paine 1994: 16). Access to Sámi pastoral ranges were negotiated amongst *siidas*, and was not necessarily mutually exclusive nor were the boundaries fixed, rather they were fluid and dynamic, responding to the changes in *siida* and heard composition and changes in ecological and climatic conditions (Karppi 2001: 369; Bunikowski 2014: 77). The states and Sámi pastoralists did not agree on territorial practices. Whereas the states have tried to impose their rigid principles of territoriality, the Sámi have often resisted such efforts (Paine 1994: 17). Since the states took a more active role in managing Sámi reindeer pastoralism, it evolved in tension with state policies (Paine 1994: 17, 164). In Norway and Sweden Sámi reindeer herding maintained strong seasonal migration patterns, though they have after the Second World War (WWII) transitioned from full nomadism to semi-nomadic transhumance (Jones 1982: 8; Paine 1994: 15). In Finland Sámi practices of nomadic reindeer herding were severely disrupted by the imposition of small herding districts in 1898 (Aikio, Pekka 2011: 88-90).

A variety of underlying attitudes shaped the Nordic states' policies towards Sámi pastoralism. Since, at the latest, the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century these underlying attitudes have shared a linear conception of development in which pastoral nomadism is ranked as less developed/civilized than sedentary forms of existence like agriculture or industry (Lehtola 1996: 69). For analytic purposes the states' policies on Sámi reindeer pastoralism are categorised into three approaches: 1) subordination of reindeer pastoralism to the developmental needs of the state on behalf of the agricultural and industrial majority (Bjørklund 1999: 23), 2) segregation of reindeer pastoralism from what were seen as the more civilised/developed majority society to 'protect' it (Mörkenstam 2002: 117-119), and 3) intervention to 'develop' reindeer pastoralism in accordance with the scientific insights of sedentary farming (Bjørklund 1999: 15, 23; Jones 1982: 8).

The Norwegian state (then autonomous, under Swedish sovereignty) clearly followed the first approach when it initiated a programme of agricultural settlement in Northern Norway in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The state claimed control over Sámi reindeer pastoralism within the country with a series of Acts beginning in 1854 (Bjørklund & Brantenberg 1981: 104; Paine 1994: 158). At first the legislation was broadly consistent with the Sami pastoralists' established practices,

but gradually became more geared towards protecting the interests of agricultural settlers at the expense of the pastoralists (Paine 1994: 158). In the preparatory work for the Reindeer Grazing Act (RGA) in 1904 it was stated that the interests of farmers must take precedence in any conflicts with nomadic 'Lapps', as 'determined by the inexorable law of development' (Bjørklund & Brantenberg 1981: 105). The state assumed that reindeer pastoralism was destined to fade away, and it was only to be tolerated when it did not impede agricultural expansion. Hence the 1933 RGA bestowed most rights on the sedentary population, and most legal liabilities on the pastoralists (Paine 1994: 158).

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century until WWII, the Swedish state practised a mixture of the first two approaches. Following its long established 'parallel theory' that assumed the Sámi pastoralists and the agricultural settlers could coexist through their separate livelihoods, it encouraged agricultural settlement to Swedish Lapland, while trying to segregate the settlers from the reindeer herding Sámi population (Lundmark 1999: 69, 97-98). This was in part motivated by a perceived need to 'protect' the Sámi from the influences of 'civilization', which could tempt them away from the nomadic lifestyle (Mörkenstam 2002: 117-119). Such temptation would make them try increasing their living standards, rendering them comfortable and neglectful of their herds, allowing reindeer stray into the fields, damaging agriculture (Mörkenstam 2002: 117-119). The state's desire to increase its control over the Sámi and its paternalistic attitude were overtly declared in the 1886 RGA, which introduced the 'Lapp Sheriff' institution to settle conflicts between Sámi and settlers and to represent the Sámi in relation to the state, effectively declaring them incapable of self-representation (Lundmark 1999: 94).

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, both the Norwegian and Swedish governments changed their approaches. Rather than assuming that reindeer pastoralism was destined to fade away or had to be protected through segregation, they started accepting that it was here to stay and consequently had to be 'developed' under the state's stewardship (Mörkenstam 2002: 124; Beach 1988: 9). This was to be achieved through 'rationalisation' by application of the scientific expertise developed in sedentary agriculture (Paine 1994: 190-191). A key aspect of the strategy was to increase the income amongst herders by decreasing their amount and increasing efficiency, as had happened in other primary sectors (Mörkenstam 2002: 124; Paine 1994: 190; Beach 1988: 9). This was most explicitly expressed in the 1971 Swedish RGA, which declared that the Sámi pastoralists' incomes should be on par with Swedish industrial workers' (Paine 1994: 190). Unfortunately, as the amount of reindeer per herder needed to meet the government's income targets was steadily rising, it implied more people would have to leave reindeer herding. Many Sámi herders pointed out that increasing their income was less important than staying in the herding livelihood (Beach 1988: 9).

In Norway, the desire to modernise reindeer herding had been expressed in government reports since the early 1960s and came to full expression in the 1878 RGA (Paine 1994: 159-160). The perception was again that of too many herders in relation to animals and available pasture. They were to be reduced by incentivising the older ones to retire and the younger ones to change livelihood, as well as through a reindeer herding licensing scheme authorising the state to decide who could be a reindeer herder (Paine 1994: 159).

The governments' rationalisation plans did not achieve their intended outcomes. Subsidies that were supposed to incentivise increased slaughter instead led to increased reindeer populations, as they reduced the pastoralists' dependence on slaughtering for cash income (Paine 1994: 190-191). The states were favouring 'modern' ranching methods, implying a shift from a) sustaining a pastoral way of life, where one tries to maintain a large herd and slaughter only the minimum animals required to support one's family, to b) one of stock-rearing, where meat production is maximized by keeping alive the minimum amount of animals needed to reproduce the herd (Paine 1994: 189). Therefore the states favored moving towards a closed range system, meaning pastures would be allocated to specific herding units in accordance with a more sedentary system like the Finnish one (Paine 1994: 189). The Sámi pastoralists were by no means unanimous in their reaction towards the changes. Some welcomed them, while many others resented the states' 'rationalisation' drives for imposing 'the pig farm ideal' on reindeer herding (Paine 1994: 179, 191). The heart of the problem was the states' denial of Sámi self-determination (Paine 1994: 161).

Finnish policy on reindeer husbandry has been quite consistent since 1898, when the Finnish Senate (autonomous under Russian sovereignty) dramatically imposed sedentary farming rules by ordering herders to form small territorial units called *paliskunta* (Aikio, Pekka 2011: 88). The small size of the *paliskunta* districts was a big obstacle to continued nomadic reindeer pastoralism, and encouraged Finnish peasants to practice reindeer husbandry as a secondary activity, forcing many Sámi out of reindeer herding (Beach, Andersson & Aikio 1992: 84). This expressed an approach to sedentarise reindeer husbandry based on the misguided assumption that sedentary farming is always superior to nomadism. Yet, in the ecological context, the stationary sedentary model prohibits the reindeer from migrating between summer and winter pastures, leading them to trample the lichen they depend on in the winter, necessitating extensive reliance on emergency fodder during the winter (Aikio 2016).

### **3.2 Hydroelectric development and Sámi reindeer pastoralism**



This subsection uses three examples hydroelectric projects to illustrate how developmentalist thinking clearly subordinated Sámi pastoralism to the interests of industrial development, to the extent that they were at times hardly taken into consideration at all when the projects were planned into their territories.

The Porjus and Suorva dams on Lule River are the biggest hydropower intrusions into Sámi reindeer pastoralism in Sweden. The Porjus dam was built in 1910-1914. The dam at Suorva 90 km further upstream was built in 1919-1923, and elevated three times in 1937-1939, 1943 and 1966–1972. The dams and access railroads were built along the migration routes of Sirkas and Sörkaitum Lapp Villages. Reindeer pastoralism had not been included as a livelihood which interests had to be taken into consideration (though agriculture and fishing had been) in the Water Act that authorised the projects (Lantto & Össbo 2011: 338-339; Össbo 2014: 86-92). The Water Act also took legal precedence over the RGA, which should protect Lapp Villages within the Cultivation border (which the dams were) from such intrusions. When the Porjus dam was built the Lapp Villages were completely omitted from consideration. For the construction and first two elevations of the Suorva dam, some compensation was paid annually into the Lapp Fund which was under government stewardship, outside Sámi control (Lantto & Össbo 2011: 338-339; Össbo 2014: 104-105, 152, 171). It was only for the third elevation of the dam, nearly doubling the amount of pasture lost to flooding, that the affected villages were directly compensated. By then the Sámi pastoralists had started organizing themselves politically through the creation of the National Union of the Swedish Sami People (SSR) (Össbo 2014: 164-171, 217-219).

The adverse effects of the dams on the Lapp villages include treacherous ices on the regulated waters (Össbo 2014: 154; Jones 1992: 9). Flooding created gaps in pastures and dependence on the outside aid of reindeer transportation by lorry over barren patches, provided by the energy company Vattenfall (Össbo 2014: 155). Fishing, once done by women children and elderly in shallow waters with small boats became impossible as the elevated water levels also made the lakes stormier, requiring bigger fishing boats and the muscle power of men to operate them. This broke the family oriented subsistence economy, compelling women to look for salaried income elsewhere (ibid: 251).

Among these examples, the Lokka-Porttipahta hydroelectric project in Finish Lapland was the most brutal intrusion in terms of its impact on the local population and on Sámi reindeer pastoralism. The reservoir, consisting of two artificial lakes feeding river Kemijoki displaced 560 of the 660 inhabitants of the mixed Sámi-Finnish communities of Sompio. Implementation of the project began in 1954 when Kemijoki Ltd company started buying up private land properties from the basin area (Mustonen & Mustonen 2011: 14-34). To minimize costs properties were bought

individually with tactics involving efforts to get the sellers drunk and threatening them with expropriations. Expropriations were eventually carried out against those refusing sell, at much lower rates of compensation than the 'voluntary' sales (Aikio, Antti, 2011: 106). Reindeer herders received no compensation for pastures over which they did not have formal ownership (Mustonen & Mustonen 2011: 14, 30-34).

The Lokka-Porttipahta project disrupted the local ecology, which had previously been diverse enough to enable a complex nomadic reindeer herding system. The pastoralists lost about a quarter of their pastures, and were also affected by the clear cuts, new roads, and micro-climate change caused by the increased humidity brought by the basins, resulting in icy rains in the autumn. The icy rains would create an ice-layer over the lichens, making them difficult to access for the reindeer and leading them to uproot them (Aikio, Pekka 2011: 93; Mustonen & Mustonen 2011: 41-50). Once an important subsistence activity in Sompio, fishing was dramatically impaired with reduced fish stock (Mustonen & Mustonen 2011: 41, 50). Kemijoki Ltd only bothered to log the commercially valuable pine and spruce, leaving the birch forests to rot, degrading water quality, while submerged tree tops damaged boats and fishing nets (Mustonen & Mustonen 2011: 18). The surviving reindeer husbandry was reduced from a complex pastoral nomadic system to yet another of Finland's stock-raring operations (Aikio 2016).

The Alta-Kautokeino watercourse hydroelectric project in Norway's northernmost region of Finnmark, home to the majority of Norway's Sámi reindeer pastoralists, was announced in 1969 by state owned energy company Norsk Hydro. It caused a confrontation that would subsequently redefine state-Sámi relations in Norway. The original plan would have dammed a large part of the Finnmark tundra and flooded the entire Sámi village Masi (Korsmo 1988: 518-519). A series of protests by Masi residents, and a warning of catastrophic consequences for reindeer pastoralism by Norks Hydro's own report, convinced it to dramatically scale back the project, sparing Masi (Paine 1982: 3; Bjørklund & Brantenberg 1981: 46).

The scaled-down project would still be more damaging to reindeer pastoralism than Norks Hydro would admit. In its own assessment it applied sedentary-agrarian logic, calculating the percentage of pasture directly lost to flooding, which approximated 'food for 21 reindeer for 115 days' (Paine 1982: 49). A group of reindeer herders sued the government, arguing that the damage was much more extensive. For example, Norks hydro omitted the impact of access road, which the herders suspected would worse than that of the dam itself. Moreover, the dam and access road would be in a sensitive bottle-neck area between two watercourses on the migration routes (Paine 1982: 36-50; Bjørklund & Brantenberg 1981: 21). When The project went ahead in 1979, with court cases still

pending (the herders eventually lost in the supreme court), it was met by a civil disobedience campaign by Sámi and environmental activists occupying the access road, while another group of Sámi erected a *lavvu* (Sámi styled tent) and went on hunger strike outside the parliament. The project was temporarily halted, but resumed after 600 police officers removed the protester from the access road (Anderssen & Midttun 1985: 319). When completed in 1987 it had been further scaled-down and was built in the cleanest possible way, making the damage less severe than had been feared. (Lehtonen 2004: 77). The access road did indeed prove to be more damaging to reindeer pastoralism than the installation itself, by providing unfettered access to tourism with a mushrooming of cabins along it (Sara 2016). Resulting from the *Alta* controversy, a Norwegian Sámi rights commission was appointed in 1981. Its recommendations led to the constitutional Sámi rights article in 1988, establishment of the Norwegian Sámi Parliament in 1989, and the Sámi Act of 1987 (Broderstad 2011: 899-900).

### 3.3 Section conclusion

This section has attempted to demonstrate how the concept of ‘development’ as defined by U&CD is consistent with the Nordic states’ policies towards the Sámi pastoralists, which were informed by developmentalist thinking that placed pastoralists on the bottom rung of the developmental ladder. Such thinking justified treating the Sámi pastoralists as either subordinate to agricultural or industrial developmental needs, or as subject to state control, in need ‘development’ assistance. As U&CD not only fails to take issue with such socio-economic ranking, but actually makes it a core aspect of their theory, they have no theoretical basis for contesting such policies and can do little else than naturalise the actions of the states, which were simply responding to the ‘whip of external necessity’ to maintain their economic and military competitiveness. The Sámi pastoralists would only fit into the U&CD framework as an intriguing but marginal aspect to the Nordic countries internal ‘unevenness’.

## 4. An Alternative Perspective

The fundamental problem with U&CD in relation to Eurocentrism is its ontological monism. Ontological monism allows it to rank societies as more or less ‘developed’, giving the theory explanatory value, but also makes it theoretically incapable of contesting developmentalism. Marisol de la Cadena’s (2010, 2015) work on Andean indigenous ‘cosmopolitics’ provides a contrary example

of how ontological plurality can be illuminated. She demonstrated how the Andean indigenous cosmologies are in 'excess' of what the modernist ontologies of the states can perceive, and that the indigenous peoples political actions can only be understood by going beyond the ontological monism of the states (de la Cadena 2010: 346-347; 2015: 275-277). This is exemplified by how the indigenous peoples' resistance to state authorised mining projects were motivated, above all, by how these projects endangered the existence of the powerful earth-beings on which the fates of their communities depended. The earth-beings, which are also mountains, were under threat from mining projects that would level those mountains, which would anger the earth-beings to the extent that it would cause them to kill through disasters (de la Cadena 2010: 338-355).

Besides the cosmological dimension, I would like to draw a parallel to the ontological dimension of the economics in state-Sámi relations. As demonstrated above, the states adopted a developmentalist ontology that either treated reindeer pastoralism as destined for extinction or something 'backward' that had to be 'developed'. Either way, reindeer pastoralism was seen through a sedentary ontology that obscured its inner workings and values. As an analytical framework, U&CD could do little else than naturalising the states' developmentalist perspective. Therefore, I propose Enrique Dussel's liberation philosophy to better illuminate the ontology of Sámi reindeer pastoralism.

#### **4.1 Dussel's Ethics of Liberation**

Dussel interprets HM as an ethical hermeneutics of the economy, where the state of the economy is assessed from the perspective of an excluded party to identify the obstacles to their symmetrical inclusion, and how they can be overcome. Therefore ethics is the first philosophy from which all else follows (Barber 1997: 97). Very much simplified, Dussel's ethics consists of four criterions. The first is the overriding 'ethical-material criterion' according to which everyone should have the means to reproduce themselves and improve their lives. Self-reproduction always happens within a community, making all communities ethical, as they constantly have to make decision on how to collectively reproduce themselves (Dussel 2013: 95-104).

The second principle, the 'validity criterion', demands that all human beings affected by a decision are symmetrically included in the deliberation process (ibid: 144-155). The third principle, the 'feasibility criterion', demands that decisions have to be practically feasible, and not 'ethically impossible'. Actions that would make the life of any human being impossible are ethically impossible, irrational, and should not be implemented. This subordinates instrumental reason to

ethics (ibid: 191). Acknowledgement that these three criteria are ideals to be strived for, but impossible to fully realise in practice, leads to the fourth principle, the 'critical validity criterion'.

The 'critical validity criterion' departs from the assumption that any human community inevitably produces excluded groups (ibid: 279). They are identified with reference to the 'ethical-material criterion' as those who do not enjoy equal rights to reproduce and improve their lives (ibid: 282-3). Such groups exist because of under-fulfilment of the 'validity criterion', meaning they have been excluded from the deliberation process, which allows the hegemonic community to hold its truth claim (Reality I) as valid (ibid: 282-3). Once an excluded community has developed critical awareness and formulated its contrary truth claim (Reality II), it becomes their objective to publicise their truth claim (Reality II) to invalidate the truth claim of the hegemonic community (Reality I). To fulfil the 'critical validity criterion', the hegemonic community should accept the truth claim of the excluded community (Reality II), which would entail a liberating transformation of the hegemonic community, removing the obstacles to the fulfilment of the excluded community's rights under the 'ethical-material criterion' (ibid: 344). Should the excluded fail in persuading the hegemonic system, they are entitled to proportionate resistance to the harm inflicted on them (ibid: 409).

The liberating transformation would have to be qualitative, culturally empowering. The excluded are (partially) 'exterior' to the hegemonic system, having their external values. To understand their demands it requires hermeneutical understanding of their cultures (ibid: 299). To this end Dussel uses the concept of 'exteriority', defined in relation to the Heideggerian concept of 'world' or 'totality'.

## 4.2 Dussel's Poietic Materialism

A world/totality is a realm of shared public meaning; a shared ontological horizon. All ontological meaning is constituted within the horizon of a world/totality, and all human communities are the centre of their own world generating their own meaning. Such meaning need not be incommensurable, as their boundaries of worlds/totalities can overlap and merge (Dussel 1985: 23-27). An excluded/exterior community is a world/totality whose values are denied by the hegemonic world/totality (Dussel 1985: 41). Liberation philosophy is capable of illuminating the needs of 'exterior' communities through its *poietic* materialism.

*Poietic* materialism begins with the Heideggerian inspired 'ontological difference' between *Being* and *being*, which manifests itself in the context of worlds/totalities (Polt 1999: 40-41). The

term *being* refers to ontic material entities that exist regardless of whether any human being is aware of them (Dussel 1985: 4). The term *Being* refers to the ontological realm of worlds/totalities, where *Being* is a sense-thing, having shared public meaning within the world/totality (ibid: 4, 22). The 'ontological difference' refers to the difference between the existence of entities (*beings*) and their having shared human meaning, or *Being* (ibid: 23-4). The reality of *beings* (entities) does not depend on them having *Being* (being sense-things), neither do they have fixed or natural *Being*. The same *being* can have different *Being* to different human worlds/totalities. *Beings* do not have to be ontic entities (*beings*) as they can be imaginary constructs embedded within the shared public consciousness, like fictional characters or mythical figures (ibid: 23).

The 'ontological difference' makes Dussel's conceptual distinction between 'cosmos', 'nature', 'matter' and 'mediations' intelligible. Cosmos refers to all material entities (*beings*) that exist regardless of human awareness (ibid: 23). The parts of the cosmos that are perceived as significant by humanity, but have not been envisioned as fulfilling any instrumental purpose, are termed as 'nature' (ibid: 107). When a human being or community envisions an object of nature in an instrumental context, it is subjected to a *proyecto* (ibid: 24). The term *proyecto* signifies self-projection into the future, and can apply to individuals and communities/worlds/totalities (ibid: 24). An object of nature that is subjected to the *proyecto* is reconstituted as 'matter' (ibid: 24). Once 'matter' is subjected to the labour activities of the community it is reconstituted as a 'mediation' fulfilling an instrumental function for the world/totality. This process of reconstitution is termed *poiesis* (ibid: 38, 53). The same natural *being* can be *poietically* constituted as 'matter' in variety of ways depending on what kind of 'mediation' it is envisioned as, including the possibility of different communities constituting it in contrary and mutually exclusive ways to fulfil their different *proyectos*.

Dussel's liberation philosophy can provide new insights into state-Sámi relations. Its presumption of ontological plurality enables illumination of different cultures, and potential for translation between them. Applied to the empirical material above, it would show how nature that had already been constituted as mediations of one kind by the Sámi pastoralists (pastures, fishing waters, etc.) was forcibly reconstituted by the Nordic metropolitan communities as mediations of another kind (hydropower). As this was done without the consent of the Sámi pastoralists, and impeded the reproduction of their lives, it was ethically impossible, and should not have been carried out in this manner. Moreover, the intrusions amounted to a form of forcible ontological translation. By undercutting the material basis of the Sámi pastoralist world, and offering monetary

compensation, they encouraged moving away from a particular subsistence economy, to one of commodified exchange relations.

## **5. Conclusion**

In summary, U&CD proves incapable of overcoming Eurocentrism, due its narrow 'development' centric ontology. It provides no theoretical basis for contesting the policies of the Nordic states in relation to the Sámi pastoralists, but rather reinforces the states' perspectives by validating developmentalist socio-economic ranking of societies, with industrial societies at the apex and nomadic ones at the bottom. Conversely, the ontological pluralism of liberation philosophy enables an analysis that illuminates the ontological horizon and struggles faced by reindeer pastoralists in relation to developmentalist agendas, and could offer insights for better informed policy.

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